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CHIPPING SODBURY

F. F. FOX

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Frontispiece.

CHIPPING SODBURY CHURCH ON THE EAST AND SOUTH SIDES.

THE HISTORY OF THE
CITY OF SALISBURY
FROM THE FIRST
SETTLEMENT OF THE
CITY OF SALISBURY

SOLD
BY J. H. QUAY STREET.

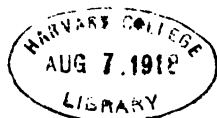


The History of the Parishes of Old
Sodbury and of Little Sodbury,
and of the Town of Chipping
Sodbury, in the County of
Gloucester.

BY
FRANCIS F. FOX, F.S.A.

BRISTOL:
J. W. ARROWSMITH, PRINTER, 11 QUAY STREET.
1907.

R- 5233.55



*Gift of
William Endicott, Jr.*

To
The Rev. CANON BAZELEY,
Rector of Matson,

Whose devotion to the interests of the Bristol and
Gloucestershire Archæological Society will never be
forgotten.

PREFACE.

My apology for attempting to write the history of the three Sodburies is, that on the occasion of the last visit of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archæological Society to this neighbourhood Canon Bazeley urged upon all the members the duty of writing the history of the towns or of the neighbourhood in which they dwelt.

The history of the Sodburies, not being without interest, proved an easy task, and the kind help which my neighbours gave me made it an agreeable one.

My sincere thanks are due to the Rev. C. S. Taylor, who was good enough to read and correct my manuscript; to the late Rev. Canon Robert Nash, Vicar of Old Sodbury, and to the late Rev. James Dumas, both of whom gave me many valuable notes; to Mrs. J. D. B. Trenfield, for lending me the deeds relating to the town of Chipping Sodbury; to Mr. John Trenfield, to his son Mr. J. W. Trenfield, and to Mr. Higgs, for valuable local information.

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The History of Chipping Sodbury.

CHIPPING SODBURY is a country town on the road between Bristol and Oxford, and it forms one of three places, all lying together, under the name of Sodbury, the other two being Old Sodbury and Little Sodbury.

The parish of Chipping Sodbury is a small one, of only about ninety-two acres; and at a date somewhat uncertain it was carved out of the manor of Old Sodbury, which still completely encircles it. It is not mentioned in Domesday, but it must have become a town early in the twelfth century, for important grants of land were made to its burgesses at a date before A.D. 1179, as will afterwards appear. Rudder says that the word "Chipping" was first added to the town in the reign of Henry III., who ascended the throne in 1216. Chipping Sodbury, as its name implies, was the market town of the neighbourhood; and although it became a separate manor, it was so closely allied to its parent, Old Sodbury, that for a considerable period the two manors belonged to the same lord, and were treated as one.

Old Sodbury deserves its name, for there is evidence of its existence in Roman times. When Publius Ostonius Scapula arrived in Britain as governor A.D. 50, he found that many of the British tribes had revolted from Rome. Among other precautions, he fortified the banks of the Severn, and placed garrisons at Sodbury, Gloucester, and other suitable positions.

The Romans withdrew from Britain in the fifth century, and they were succeeded by the Saxons, who landed at Southampton about fifty years later. But eighty-two years of hard fighting took place before these fresh invaders were able to advance into Gloucestershire.

In A.D. 577 the great battle between the West Saxons and the British Celts was fought at Dyrham, a place which is not more than six miles from Chipping Sodbury. Professor Freeman considered it the most decisive fight in the history of our nation.

The Saxon name for Sodbury was Soppanbyrg. The Rev. C. S. Taylor, whose knowledge of Gloucestershire in Saxon times may be implicitly relied upon, tells us,* when describing Gloucestershire in the eighth century, that land was then sometimes given to the Church on the distinct condition that the monastery was always to be ruled by one of the family of the founder, if a fit person was forth-

* Rev. C. S. Taylor, *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, xvi. 67.

coming. It was an endowment of the same kind with the fellowship for founders' kin at the universities.

The See of Worcester, which embraced Worcestershire, part of Warwickshire, and all Gloucestershire east of the Severn, was founded A.D. 680; and a curious instance of the above-named practice is afforded by the history of that cathedral's estate at Sodbury. Bishop Mildred, 743-775, granted the land at Soppanbyrg to Eanbald, and he to Eastmund, on this condition, that as long as there was any man in Holy Orders, and worthy of them, in their family, he should hold his land; but if otherwise, the land should not pass into lay hands, but should revert to the See of Worcester; and Eastmund before his death charged his heir to keep this compact. But after his death his family defrauded the souls of the departed and also the church of Worcester. Bishop Eadberht (822-848) and Bishop Aelhun (848-872) and Werefrith often demanded back this land, but could not obtain justice till Earldorman Æthelred assembled the Witan at Saltwic (probably the Witenagemote at Droitwich) in 888, when Werefrith pleaded against the kinsmen. None of them would take Orders. Then Eadnoth, who had the land, paid Werefrith forty mancusses; and with the leave of the convent at Worcester, Werefrith granted Eadnoth the land in perpetuity at a rent of fifteen shillings yearly, to be paid at Tetbury.* The agreement is

* Kemble, *C. D.*, cccxxvii.; Birch, *Cart. Sax.*, p. 582.

signed by the bishop, by five priests (no doubt members of the Worcester Chapter), and seven others.

The fact was that the religious life had fallen into disrepute; and the country had fallen so low in learning, that there was hardly a single priest who could translate the church service into Saxon, or could understand the words he sang. King Alfred was compelled to people his monasteries with inmates from foreign lands; and it was nothing uncommon that in 888 Eadnoth could find no member of his family who would enter Holy Orders to hold the land at Sodbury.

The Danes first appeared in Gloucestershire in A.D. 855;* in 877 they laid siege to Gloucester, and they succeeded in taking it. They then withdrew to Chippenham, and met a crushing defeat by King Alfred at Edington in Wiltshire. In 915 the Danes again entered the Severn, and were again defeated. After midsummer in 1016, Canute and Edmund joined battle at Sherston, a town about ten miles distant from Sodbury. It was fiercely contested for two whole days, with the result that on the following night Canute withdrew to London. Shortly afterwards the quarrel was composed, Edmund retaining the over-lordship of the whole realm, with the government of Wessex, London, Essex and East Anglia, whilst Canute obtained the sovereignty of the rest of the land.

* F. A. Hyett, *Gloucester in National History*, p. 15.

Edmund died soon after this settlement, and early in the following year Canute was formally acknowledged by the Witan of all England as their king, and the Danish wars were over.

In Edward the Confessor's reign the manor of Sodbury, which then embraced the future Chipping Sodbury, but not Little Sodbury (as afterwards set forth), formed part of the vast estates of Brictric, Earl of Gloucester, a man of great influence.

King Edward sent him as ambassador to the Court of Flanders, where his noble figure proved his ruin. Matilda, the daughter of Count Baldwin, fell in love with the young Saxon, and offered him her hand and fortune. Brictric declined her proposal, and thereby won the undying hatred of his future queen. This was evinced when, as wife of William the Conqueror, she took deep revenge after the battle of Hastings by obtaining her husband's permission to seize all Brictric's lands, as well as to cast him into Winchester Gaol for the remainder of his life.

The manor of Sodbury is described in Domesday as consisting of "ten hides, four plow-tillages in demean, and twelve villeins with five plow-tillages, and four bordars, and eighteen servi, and one park, and one mill of 5/- (rent).

"The Steward hath lately added one mill of 40 denarii. There is a wood one mile long, and one broad. Humfrid paid for this manor £16 10s.

“ One yard-land in Wiche belongs to it, which paid twenty-five sextaries of salt. Urso the sheriff has so oppressed the men, that they now cannot pay the salt.”

It must be explained that although the number of acres to the hide in Gloucestershire averaged two hundred and eighty seven,* much of the land in Sodbury Manor being of poor quality, the hide was of much greater dimensions. The nine teams above mentioned, each cultivating one hundred and twenty acres annually, is evidence that there were about one thousand and eighty acres in this manor under plough-tillage eight centuries ago. This amounts to only about one-third of the manor ; and the remaining two-thirds consisted of pasture land, the park, and the wood. The mill added by the bailiff is no doubt the one close to the Yate boundary, and was added in the twenty years which elapsed between the accession of William in 1066 and the Domesday Survey in 1086. Humphrey was in all probability a chamberlain of Queen Matilda's, from whom he received a good deal of land in Gloucestershire. Wiche was probably Droitwich ; and Urso, who was Sheriff of Worcestershire, was a very hard and tyrannical man. The salt works were under his care, and the poor tenants pertaining to the manor of Sodbury, who had to pay twenty-five measures of salt to Brictric, could not do so by reason of the

* Rev. C. S. Taylor.

oppression of Urso d'Abitot, who is called in this entry with singular fitness "*Ursus*."

There was a "prettie little Park" in the manor, the site of which is still marked by the name of Park Farm, as on the map inserted at the end of this book. It was originally of sixty-nine acres, but was subsequently enlarged to about one hundred and fifteen acres.

In his *Analysis of the Domesday Survey of Gloucestershire*, the Rev. Charles S. Taylor tells us that the park on Brictric's estate at Old Sodbury was an enclosure made in all probability not for pleasure, but for the safe custody of animals wild or tame. In several instances we find mention of "haiaæ." These were enclosures in the woods fenced round with strong hedges, into which the beasts of the chase were driven, the entrance being then closed by hurdles. The building and the repair of the lord's deer-hedge was one of the ordinary incidents of tenant's service, the term "deer" being used for all kinds of game. With regard to the wood mentioned in Domesday as part of the manor, it probably formed part of a much larger wood of the same name. Leland tells us that "at the Wodde in the great valley between Sobbyri and Kingswood was called 'Horwood.'"

In A.D. 1227 we find in Smythe's *Lives of the Berkeleys* that King Henry III. at the general petition of these parts, and *especially those of the*

Forest of Horwood,* did disafforest all the towns, lands and woods, between Huntingford (a mill where Berkeley Hundred and Hugh Gourney's lands parted) and the wood of the furzes, now called Kingswood, within four miles of Bristol, and so from Severn-side to the brow of the hills by Sodbury, excepting only Alleston Park (clearly Alveston), which appears as a royal manor in the pages of Domesday.

It is evident that the intention was to record that in 1227 the district which lay between the hills and the Severn from near Berkeley to the north, to the northern boundary of Kingswood Forest on the south, was exempted from the dominion of the forest laws.

Mr. Braine, in his *History of Kingswood Forest*, tells us that the substantial reason why King Henry III. almost immediately issued the mandate for the disafforestation was, indeed, his poverty. He accepted a sum of £150 in money for his compliance, a fact which is not to be wondered at, having regard to the exhausting nature of his wars with the barons.

Subsequently Abbot Long, of the Augustinian Abbey of Bristol, impleaded Lord Thomas of Berkeley before the Pope for sundry trespasses upon the estates of the abbey, complaining also of his disafforesting the country about Chipping

* Close Rolls, Record Office: "By command of the King, 20 June, 1228, the charter was ordered to be read by the Sheriff of Gloucester in his full county."

Sodbury, where the tenants of the abbey fed their swine.

Queen Matilda died in 1080, and the estates which she had taken from Brictric passed into the hands of her husband, William the Conqueror. He gave the manor of Sodbury to Odo, Count of Champagne,* his brother-in-law, who attended him in the invasion of England, and who for his good services was created Earl of Holderness in Yorkshire and Earl of Albermarle in Normandy. This nobleman was succeeded by his son Stephen, who married Hawise, daughter of Ralph de Mortimer. Their son William was surnamed Le Gros from his great corpulency. He had made a vow to go to Jerusalem, but growing so exceedingly fat, he obtained a dispensation from the Pope to release him from his intention.

He was a great benefactor to the burgesses of Chipping Sodbury, in granting to them and to their heirs all the liberties pertaining to the "Law of Bristol"; also by giving license for every burgher to have common for a cow in the place now called the Ridings, also lot meadow rights in the Meadow Ridings. They still enjoy the two latter privileges.

The "Law of Bristol," as then understood, was contained in the following charter granted to the citizens of Bristol by John, Earl of Moreton,

* Adelaide, sister of the Conqueror, married as her third husband Odo, Count of Champagne.

afterwards King of England, about 1188 or 1189:—

“ Charter of John Earl of Moreton to all his men and friends of France and England Welch and Irish, present and future, sends health. Know ye that I have granted, and by this present charter have confirmed to my burgesses at Bristol dwelling within the walls and without, as far as the boundary of the town, that is to say within Sandbrooke and Bewell and Brightune-bridge, and the spring in the way near Aldbury of Knolle, all their liberties and free customs, as well freely and completely (or more so) as they ever had them in my time or in the time of my predecessors. But the liberties which they granted to them are these: That no burgess of Bristol shall plead or be impleaded out of the walls of the town in any plea, except pleas relating to foreign tenures which do not belong to the hundred of the town: And that they shall be quit of murder within the bounds of the town: And that no burgess shall wage duel, unless he shall have been appealed for the death of any stranger who was killed in the town, and did not belong to the town: And that no one shall take an Inn within the walls by assignment or by livery of the Marshall against the will of the burgesses: And that they shall be quit of toll and lastage and portage, and all other customs throughout my whole land

and power : And that no one shall be condemned in a matter of money, unless according to the law of the hundred, namely by forfeiture of forty shillings : And that the said hundred-court shall be held only once in a week : And that no one in any plea shall be able to argue his cause in miskenning : And that they may lawfully have their lands and tenures and mortgages and debts throughout my whole land whoever owes them anything : And with respect to lands or tenures which are within the town, that they shall be held by them duly according to the custom of the town : And that with regard to debts which have been lent in Bristol, and mortgages there made, pleas shall be held in the town according to the custom of the town : And that if anyone in any other place in my land shall take toll of the men of Bristol, if he shall not restore it after he shall be required, the Prepositor of Bristol shall take from him a distress at Bristol, and force him to restore it : And that no stranger tradesman shall buy within the town of a man who is a stranger, leather, corn, or wool, but only of the burgesses : And that no stranger shall have a wine shop unless in a ship, nor shall sell cloth for cutting except at the fair : And that no stranger shall remain in the town with his goods, for the purpose of selling his goods, but for forty days : And that no burgess shall be confined

or distrained anywhere else within my land or power for any debt, unless he be debtor or surety : And that they shall be able to marry themselves, their sons, their daughters and their widows without the license of their lords : And that no one of their lords shall have the wardship or the disposal of their sons or their daughters on account of their lands out of town, but only the wardship of their tenements which belong to their own fee, until they shall be of age : And that there shall be no recognition in the town : And that no one shall take tyne in the town unless for the use of the Lord Earls, and that according to the custom of the town : And that they may grind their corn wherever they shall choose : And that they may have all their reasonable Guilds, as well or better than they had them in the time of Robert and his son William, Earls of Gloucester : And that no burgess shall be compelled to bail any man, unless he himself chooses it, although he be dwelling on his land : We have granted to them all their tenures within the walls and without, as far as the aforesaid boundaries in messuages, in cospes, in buildings upon the water and elsewhere, whenever they shall be in the town, to be held in free burgage namely by landgable service, which they shall pay within the walls. We have granted also that any of them may make improvements as much as he can in

erecting buildings anywhere on the bank or elsewhere, so that it be without damage of the borough and town : And that they shall have and possess all void grounds and places which are contained within the aforesaid boundaries, to be built on at their pleasure.

“ Wherefore I will and firmly enjoin that my burgesses aforesaid of Bristol and their heirs shall have and hold all their aforesaid liberties and free customs as is written above of me and my heirs, as well and as completely (or more so) as ever they had them in good times, well and peaceably and honourably, without any hindrance or molestation which anyone may offer them on that account.”

Witnesses :

STEPHEN RIDEL, my Chancellor,
 WILLIAM DE WENNEN,
 ROGER DE DLAU,
 ROGER DE NEWPORT,
 MAURICE DE BERKLY,
 ROBERT his brother,
 HANS DE VALLONIS,
 SIMON DE MARSH,
 GILBERT RAFT,
 WILLIAM DE LA FELEYSE,
 Master BENEDICT,
 Master PETER,
 and many others at Bristol.

William le Gros had only one child, a daughter, named Hawise, after her grandmother. She married three times : first to William de Mandeville, Earl of Essex ; second to William de Fortibus, a gallant admiral ; third to Baldwin de Betune, Earl of the Isle of Wight. Her only child was by her second husband, who was named after his father, William de Fortibus.

This young noble followed the benevolent example of his grandfather by granting to the bailiffs of Chipping Sodbury for the use of the burghers in consideration of forty marks and a palfrey, two fields, viz.

Galloneffeld,	20 acres	} both arable,
Tyrianesinding,	8 „	

also a meadow called Roshemed, 4 acres.*

He took the name of Crassus, the Latin equivalent for Le Gros, and he obtained it also for his deceased father and grandfather. He was the fourth Earl of Albemarle, and with the name of Crassus he seemed to follow the chief vice of that Latin hero, for he took service under King John, and under the barons who opposed the King, as his advantage alternated from one to the other. He is described by Dr. Stubbs as a "feudal adventurer of the worst stamp."† When Henry III. came to the throne the Earl rebelled, but he was speedily subdued and excommunicated. This he bought off

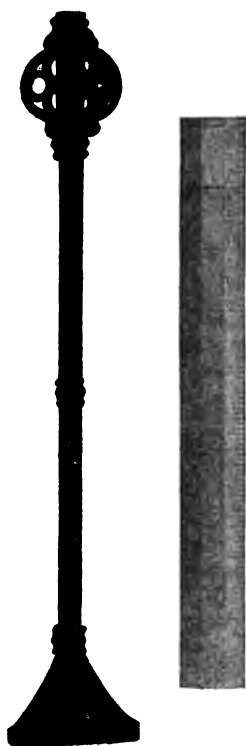
* Deed in the possession of the town. Date lost.

† *Dictionary of National Biography*, lxi. 367—369.

by taking the crusaders' vow. He set out for the Holy Land in 1241, and died at sea in the following year. He married, before the year 1215, Avelina, the second daughter and co-heiress of Richard Montfichet. She died in 1239, leaving a son, William, who died in 1260. This man's only child was a daughter named Aveline, who married Edward, Earl of Lancaster, and died without issue.

About the date of William le Gros's gift to the burgesses of Chipping Sodbury, William Green, of the same town, granted them by deed, the date of which is lost, Gaunts fields, four in number ; and at the same time, Jordan Bishop, who was then lord of Little Sodbury, granted them common of pasture for cattle in Dymershed and Norwood. According to Bigland these appear to be Kingrove Wood and Horwood Common, within the bounds of what was in ancient times Little Sodbury Park. Soon after the extinction of the Albemarle family, the manor of Sodbury appears to have passed to Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester and of Hertford, whose family ended in a female (Elianore). She married, in 2 Edward II. (1308-9), Hugh le Despenser the Younger, and upon his decease, Lord William le Zouch of Mortimer. She died in the second year of Edward III. (1337), seized of Tewkesbury, Fairford, Sodbury, and Archer Stoke.

The family of Despenser, so celebrated in English history, ended in a female (Isabel), whose



The Fifteenth-Century Mace.



The Beauchamp Arms, sunk in foot of Mace. Exact size.

first husband was Richard Beauchamp, Lord Bergavenny, who afterwards became Earl of Worcester, about 1412. By dispensation from the Pope, Isabel married as her second husband Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. Her daughter, Anne, married Richard Nevil, Earl of Salisbury, at some uncertain date, probably before 1439, and he, after his brother-in-law's death, was created in right of his wife Earl of Warwick, and was called the "King-maker." He was a man famous for his courage, and was generally called the "stout Earl of Warwick." He was killed at the battle of Barnet, fighting for the House of Lancaster; and King Edward IV., represent-

ing the Yorkist cause, promptly procured an Act of Parliament to divest Anne, the widowed Countess, of her vast possessions, and to have them settled upon her daughters. But when, after the battle of Bosworth, King Henry VII. came to the throne, he alleged the injustice of this Act to the Countess of Warwick, and he procured another Act reinstating her in her possessions. This step, apparently so kind, was, however, only taken for his own advantage. He desired to acquire her vast estates for himself, and he succeeded. The deed of transfer, which is a very long one and included Sodbury, can still be seen at the Record Office.

The town of Chipping Sodbury still retains a very interesting mace of the fifteenth century, which was given to the town by the Countess. It is $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, and it has the Beauchamp Arms sunk in its foot.

The list of freeholders on this manor of Sodbury is, according to Sir Robert Atkyns and S. Rudder:—

	A.D.	
William de Weyland	10 Henry III.	1225-6
Thomas de Weyland, his son and heir, had markets, fairs, court- leet and gallows granted	55 Henry III.	1270-1
He claimed to have return of writs, assize of Beer and Ale, also pillory and tumbrel	9 Edw. I.	1280-1
The King seized the Manor for a year, day and Waste, on forfeiture of Thomas Weyland for felony and his objuration of the Realm . .	19 Edw. I.	1290-1

- Marjery de Moss, Weyland's wife,
and Richard their son, petitioned
against the seizure, on the ground
that Thomas had levied a fine. . . 6 Edw. I.
to Aspul, by whom the lands had
been re-granted to Thomas and
Marjery for their lives with the
remainder in tail to Richard their
son; and that the first estate
being a joint one in both could
not be seized for the forfeiture
of one. This was accorded,
although it was urged that a
felon's wife ought not to enjoy his
lands during his life.
- Sir Edward Burnell died seized—
date unknown. Elianor his
widow died seized 37 Edw. III. 1362-3
- Their son, Edward Burnell, suc-
ceeded; had livery of the town
and two fairs Same year.
- Hugh le Despenser and his wife
levied a fine to their own use in
fee 38 Edw. III. 1363-4
- Edward Lord Despenser and his
wife (who was daughter and heir
of Bartholomew Burghurst) held
the manor of Sodbury, and the
borough of Chipping Sodbury;
he died seized 49 Edw. III. 1374-5
- Thomas, their son and heir, was
attainted *temp.* Richard II., but
his estates were restored to his
daughter Isabel, who married
Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick.

Elizabeth Stanshaw was seized of
 the manor of Chipping Sodbury 13 Henry IV. 1411-2
 John Stanshaw—the same 37 Henry VI. 1458-9
 Robert Stanshaw—the same .. 12 Edw. IV. 1496-7
 This property was afterwards in
 the name of Brooke.

John Cotherington and Alice his
 wife levied a fine of lands in Chip-
 ping Sodbury to the use of them-
 selves for life; remainder to
 Humphrey, John, and Thomas
 their sons successively in taille;
 remainder to the King, which
 was the year when Henry VI. for
 a short time recovered the throne. 49 Henry VI. 1470-1

J. D. Fosbrook's "Abstracts of Records and Manuscripts respecting the County of Gloucester, *correcting the very erroneous accounts, and supplying numerous deficiencies of Sir Robert Atkyns and subsequent writers,*" contains the following:

"The Sheriff was commanded to let William Crassus, or Gros the elder, have a market every Monday here, which must be understood to apply to tenancy of that part of the manor now called Chipping, *id est* Market Sodbury; Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester, dying seized of the manor, then holding a fee under him.

"Little Sodbury, of which there is no mention on record, or Old Sodbury, of which there is one mention, or perhaps the whole manor sometimes was also tenanted: for in 1291 Thomas de Weyland

acknowledged the right of Geoffrey de Aspale to a manor of Sodbury, but the above Geoffrey by fine granted the manor to Thomas and his heirs, the tenure being of the Earls of Gloucester.

“Robert le Muchgros died seized of the manor of Hamstede and hamlet of Alderworth : Hawise daughter and heir.

“The manor was held by the Countess of Gloucester, 9 Edward II. (1315-6).

“And when the Earldom of Gloucester was petitioned, it devolved to Hugh le Despencer, in right of Ellen his wife, sister and co-heir of the last Gilbert de Clare ; and the custody of it was upon his attainder granted to Sir Maurice Berkeley, till Ellen was restored, who had married William le Zouch.

“Accordingly it was found not to be to the King's injury if he permitted John de la Welde to give 32 acres of pasture in Great Sodbury to the Prior of Bradenstocke, held of William de la Zouch, as of the manor of Sodbury, of the inheritance of his wife, by 13s. 4d. per annum for all services ; there remaining to the above John 40 shillings lands and rents in Sodbury, held of the above William by knight's service. (This grant was the source of much trouble to the Chipping Sodbury people in after years.)

“It was again found not to be to the King's injury if he licensed Hugh le Despencer to enfeof Edward de Grymesby, John de Hamslep, and

William de Osbertone, clerks in this manor, in order that having had seisin, they might reinfeoff the above Hugh (who had a release of all the lands of his mother's inheritance),

" And Elizabeth his wife, the manor being held of the Earl of Gloucester, by the lord of the manor or his bailiff, being obliged to meet the Earl in the western part of the manor and conduct him to the eastern.

" Alice, wife of Edward Burnell, died seized of the manor from the grant of Hugh le Despencer, there being in the above manor a certain town, in which there were two fairs, and £9 18s. rent ; both manor and town being to revert to Edward le Despencer, next of kin and heir of Hugh,

" Which Edward did homage for them,

" And dying seized, left Thomas, son and heir,

" Who being attainted for endeavouring to restore Richard II., the manor and borough were granted to Constance, his widow, for life,

" Who was called upon to give account of the issues.

" Isabella Stanshawe had lands here, of which under *Yate* ; and the manor of Sodbury devolved to Isabella, daughter of Thomas le Despencer attainted, and Constance, wife *first* of Richard Beauchamp, Lord Bergavenny, and Earl of Worcester ; *second* of Richard de Beauchamp, Earl of Worcester ; *third* of Richard de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, by whom she had issue, Henry,

Duke of Warwick, who left an only daughter, Anne, who died seized of this manor.

“ At this time Ellen Eyton, who was succeeded by William Coddar in them, held two messuages, 60 acres of land, 20 of mead, and 50 of pasture in Olde Sodbury, of Richard of Warwick.

“ John Stanshawe died seized of a messuage, a virgate, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land in Sodbury ; 20 acres of pasture called Barefurlonge, a grange, a barkery, and a parcel of land called Sharpecroft, a virgate called Hayes in Old Sodbury, a pasture called Smithescroft, and a burgage in Chipping Sodbury : all of which he gave to John Stanshawe, his son and heir by charter, remainder to Nicholas Stanshawe, brother of John, remainder to Thomas Stanshawe and his heirs ; and Robert Stanshawe of Arderlegh was next of kin, and heir of Thomas, namely son of Robert, brother of Thomas.

“ Nicholas dying 35 Henry VI. (1456-7), tenure of John Nanfan and John Noryce, as of the manor of Olde Sobbery by 30 shillings per annum, Which Robert died seized of three messuages, 80 acres of mead, 120 of pasture, 20 of land, 5 of wood, and a close called Woollemoote, in the town and parish of Old Sodbury, a close of pasture there called Stohill, a close called Downhouse ; all of which were Nicholas Stanshawe's, Esq., and of 16/- burgages in Chipping Sodbury : Thomas, son and heir.

“ George, Duke of Clarence, who came to the

manor in right of Isabel his wife, co-heir of the immense Warwick estates, died seized of it : Edward, Earl of Warwick, son and heir,

“ During whose nonage the manor was committed to receivers, farmers, &c., John Cokett having the office of parker with an annuity of 2 pence per day.

“ In the next reign the old unfortunate Countess of Warwick conveyed the manor to King Henry VII.

“ Hampsted and Chipping Sodbury manors, parcel of Bradenstocke Abbey, were then granted to William Kingscote and Jane his wife, 30 Henry VIII. (1538-9), for 50 years for 106 shillings and 8 pence fee farm, and two shillings received from a tenement held by Christopher Browne.

“ John Burnell died seized of lands, having issue by Ann, William, who had issue John.

“ Seven years after, Maurice Walsh had a grant of Old and Chipping Sodbury.

“ John Walsh having obtained Little Sodbury 1 Henry VII. (1485-6), by marriage with Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Richard Forster,

“ Died seized of the manor of Kingrove, held of the manor of Old Sodbury in soccage of the Queen, and of the manor of Little Sodbury, having issue by Ann, Maurice, son and heir, who married Bridget, one of the daughters of Nicholas Vaux, knight, Lord Harrowden.

“ The Earl of Worcester died seized of lands.

"A capital messuage parcel of Westbury College was granted to Sir Ralph Sadler for 6s. 8d. reserved rent,

"And the Hempsted and Chipping Sodbury manors, parcel of Bradenstoke Abbey, were granted 4th and 5th Philip and Mary (1557-8) to Lady Anne Fortescue and John, Thomas, and Anthony, her three sons, for 29s. 11½d. reserved rent.

"That family sold, 9 Charles I. (1633-4), to Edward Stephens, Esq. : Sir Thomas Stephens to William Clutterbuck in 1675, from whence by sale to — Okey, who resold to the trustees of Henry Woodnough, Esq., with whose daughter and heir to the Smiths of Long Ashton, co. Somerset. Maurice Walshe died seized of the manor of Old Sodbury, Chipping Sodbury, Kingesgrove.

Do. Nicholas, son and heir.

"Anthony Walshe, Gent., died seized of 20 messuages, 500 acres of land, mead and pasture, and wood, in Old Sodbury and Doddington, parcel of the manor of Kingrove. Nicholas of Olveston, brother and heir.

"Nicholas Walshe, Esq., died seized of the manor of Olde Sodbury, Chipping Sodbury, alias Burgus de Sodbury, Kingrove, Little Sodbury, and a capital messuage and lands called Camer's Race. The three manors were then sold to Thomas Stephens of Lypiath, Esq., Attorney-General to Prince Henry and Prince Charles (sons of James I.).

"Thomas Burnell Gent., who had issue Thomas, Robert, John, and Mary, died seized of ten small tenements, &c., in Chipping Sodbury, held of Edward Stephens, Esq., of his manor of Sodbury, in soccage by fealty and 2/- rent.

"John Smith died seized of the reversion, after 100 years, of a messuage and two closes called Paddock's closes, containing 3 acres; 2 other closes adjacent, and 4 closes called Pearsons Rush-Leaze, 3 acres in Bradford grounds, near Horwood Common, and Ditchmore Meadow Shortes-furlonge near Windmill field, in Little Sodbury; having issue John and Alexander, which John had issue another John, the heir.*

"Through an heir-general, the manor passed to the Hartleys, in whom it is now vested, in the manner described in the Stephens pedigree under Eastington."

The "manor of Sodbury," including Old Sodbury and Chipping Sodbury, is quite distinct from that of Little Sodbury. The latter never was in the hands of the Crown. At the Conquest it was held by the Bishop of Lisieux in Normandy, or rather by his nephew, Hugh Maminot, who represented him, and who had ousted the Saxon owner, Aluuard, in Edward the Confessor's time.

* The long lists of names in the Subsidy Rolls, which exist in the Record Office, are interesting. They show that Irishmen were regarded as aliens as late as the reign of Henry VI., and paid a higher rate than natives. The Poll Tax Rolls for Gloucestershire are unfortunately very imperfect.

The parish is a small one adjoining that of Old Sodbury, and both are situated partly in the vale of Sodbury and partly on the hill rising above them to the east, which is a spur of the Cotswolds.

Immediately over Little Sodbury there is on the hill a very perfect Roman Camp, surrounded on three of its sides by a very much larger tribal British Camp. The smaller site selected by the Romans was strongly fortified, and it is still in good condition. Though small, this camp is considered to be the most perfect in Gloucestershire. The defended area, which contains upwards of twelve acres, is rectangular in shape, with the west side resting upon the escarpment of the hill, the other three sides being defended by a double agger or line of entrenchments, each consisting of a single bank and ditch, which latter is twenty-two yards wide. There are entrances both on the east and west sides. It measures three hundred and twenty yards long, and two hundred broad, and it is adapted to contain three cohorts, with double the number of allied foot, and half as many more of allied horse. It is situated only a few hundred yards from the ancient "Port Way" that connected Glevum (Gloucester) with Agnæ Solis (Bath).

It is supposed to have been used by the Saxons before the battle of Dyrham, and it certainly was used by King Edward IV. just before the battle of Tewkesbury in 1471, when a skirmish took

place between his army and that of Queen Margaret in the neighbouring town of Chipping Sodbury.

At the Conquest there were five hides taxed, and two plow-tillages in demean, and four villeins, and two bordars, with two plow-tillages. There were four servi, and twenty acres of meadow, and a little wood. It was worth £8, but is now worth £4.

Jurdan Bishop held the manor in the reign of Henry III., and granted common of pasture to the burghers of Chipping Sodbury, as particularly mentioned in the account of that place. Richard Forster was seized of this manor in the beginning of the reign of King Henry VII., and joined with Thomas Moore and his wife in levying a fine of the manor, and of the advowson of Little Sodbury to John Walsh, of Olveston, who had married Elizabeth, his daughter and heir.

On the alienation of the Berkeley estates to Henry VII. and his heirs male under the will of William, Marquis of Berkeley, John Walsh was appointed the receiver, and Sir Robert Poyntz, of Iron Acton, steward of this bequest.

John Walsh was succeeded by his son, Sir John Walsh, who married Anne, daughter of Sir Robert Pointz. He was Sheriff of Gloucestershire in 1526-7, and again in 1535-6. He won the favour of Henry VIII. by acting as his champion at the King's coronation. In 1535 the King and Queen

(Anne Boleyn) paid Sir John Walsh a visit at Little Sodbury, and a few years after the King gave Sir John the manors of Old Sodbury and Chipping Sodbury. Sir John died seized of these three manors in 1546, and was succeeded by his son Maurice; he by his son Nicholas, who died 20 Eliz. 1577-8; and he by his son Henry, who was killed in a duel in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Walter, cousin of Henry Walsh, succeeded to all three manors in the year 1608 (6 James I.).

During the reign of James I. the manors passed by purchase to Thomas Stephens, Attorney-General to Prince Henry and Prince Charles, as already stated. He died in 1613, and was succeeded by his eldest son Edward, and he by his son Sir Thomas Stephens. Thomas Stephens succeeded, who married a Miss Neale; then Edward Stephens, after whose death, in the year 1728, the property came to Robert Packer, whose mother was a daughter of Richard Stephens.

Robert Packer married a daughter and sole heir of Sir Richard Winchcombe, Baronet, of Bucklesbury in Berkshire, whose four sons died childless, and whose daughter Elizabeth became the second wife of David Hartley, M.D. Their son, Winchcombe Henry Hartley, succeeded. Little Sodbury manor house, which has a south-west aspect, dates from the fourteenth century, but the greater part of



LITTLE SODBURY MANOR HOUSE.

it is early Tudor, the projecting west wing having been added in later times. It once extended considerably on its north side. The centre of the mansion is occupied by a lofty hall, which is still entire, although dismantled. It possesses a fine fifteenth-century roof, supported on angel corbels ; but its music gallery and screen are lost.

The house, however, owes most of its interest to the fact that Tyndale, the translator of the New Testament, lived there for two years as tutor to Sir John Walsh's children. William Tyndale was born either at Slymbridge, in Gloucestershire, or at some place between that village and the Severn, and at a probable date between 1490 and 1495. He was known by the *alias* of William Huchyus. All the groups of the Tyndale family in Gloucestershire were accustomed to use both surnames, and had a tradition that they first adopted that of Huchyus to escape observation on emigrating from the north in the time of the wars of York and Lancaster. His early education was not neglected, and he had a peculiar aptitude for the acquisition of languages. He commenced to study at Oxford at the beginning of Easter Term, 1510, under the name of William Hychyus, and was admitted B.A. on the 4th July, 1512, and M.A. 2nd July, 1515. Shortly after this date he removed to Cambridge, remaining there probably to the close of 1521.

Both universities at the time of Tyndale's

sojourn were strongly influenced by the spirit of the "new learning."

Before the commencement of 1522, Tyndale, who by this time had probably taken priest's orders, accepted the post of tutor to the children of Sir John Walsh, who was lord of the manor of Little Sodbury. Walsh's wife, Anne, was the daughter of Sir Robert Poyntz, of Iron Acton; and as the eldest of their sons was barely five years old, Tyndale had ample leisure, and employed it in preaching in the surrounding villages, and at Bristol to the crowds on College Green. He found the Gloucestershire clergy less advanced in their opinions than the scholars of the universities, and he was constantly involved in strenuous theological discussions. In support of his views he translated the *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* of Erasmus, which was prefaced by a vigorous diatribe against the vices of ecclesiastics. Startled by his opinions, and annoyed by the countenance he received from Sir John Walsh, the clergy, in the absence of the bishop,* accused him to William of Malvern, the Chancellor of the See. This man was a furious bigot. He reviled, rated, and threatened Tyndale, but being satisfied as to his orthodoxy, allowed him to depart, neither branded as a heretic nor trammelled by any oath of abjuration. The per-

* An Italian prelate, no other than Julio de Medici, who as Clement VII. was subsequently appealed to in the momentous question of King Henry's divorce.

secution which he encountered from the clergy strengthened Tyndale in the belief that the Church was in a state of serious decline, and he resolved to provide an antidote by translating the New Testament into the vernacular. He openly expressed his determination to one of his opponents in the emphatic words : " If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou doest."

Tyndale's increasing sympathy with the Reformers, however, rendered Gloucestershire no longer a secure haven, and he resolved to remove to London, which indeed he did in October, 1523. His connection with Little Sodbury thus ceased, but his future career was so remarkable, that the writer hopes to be excused for very briefly sketching it.

He arrived in London in the summer of 1523, and personally solicited the patronage of Tunstall. Tunstall was a courtly scholar with little sympathy for reform, and he declined to give Tyndale any help. Disappointed in this hope, he obtained employment as a preacher, and his discourses found favour with one of his auditors, named Humphrey Monmouth, a cloth merchant and citizen of London, who was afterwards knighted and served as sheriff. He took Tyndale to his house for half a year. During his residence in London, Tyndale first came under the influence of Luther's opinions. He, however, found it impossible to accomplish

his translation of the New Testament in England, and in May, 1524, he set sail for Hamburg. From thence he went to Wittenberg to visit Luther, and probably remained there until April, 1525. He returned to Hamburg, where he was busily engaged in his task of translation, employing William Roy as his amanuensis.

From Hamburg Tyndale and Roy proceeded to Cologne, where they made arrangements with Anental and Byrekmann for printing the translation. They printed as far as the sheet bearing the signature K, when the work was betrayed by a Catholic controversialist, who at once wrote to Henry VIII. and Wolsey, warning them to keep a strict watch for the work at the English seaports. Tyndale and Roy made their escape with the printed sheets to Worms, where they were completed. Copies were smuggled over into England, and in 1526 they attracted the attention of the clergy. In spite of a plea of toleration from Wolsey, a conclave of bishops resolved that the book should be burned, and Tunstall, after denouncing it from St. Paul's Cross, issued an injunction directing all who possessed copies to give them up under pain of excommunication. Early in 1528 the distributing agent was discovered, and Wolsey, uneasy at the large sale of the book, took measures for seizing the translator at Worms. Tyndale, however, had warning, and took refuge at Marburg, where he enjoyed the protection of Philip the

Magnanimous, Landgrave of Hesse. Early in 1529 Tyndale, who seems to have made his way from Marburg to the Low Countries, was shipwrecked on the coast of Holland, on his way to Hamburg, and lost his books and papers. He reached Hamburg, where he remained for some time in the house of Margaret van Emmerson, a senator's widow, labouring on the translation of the Pentateuch. Later in the year he proceeded to Antwerp, where he found that Tunstall was making large purchases of his Testaments in order to burn them. Through a London merchant, Augustine Pockington, Tunstall unwittingly purchased a number of copies from Tyndale himself, whom he thus provided with funds.

Towards the close of the year 1531 Henry VIII.'s endeavours to arrest or kidnap Tyndale having failed, Tyndale, who had withdrawn for a time from Antwerp, returned in 1533, when the danger seemed past, and remained in the town for the rest of his life, occupied chiefly with the revision of his translations of the Pentateuch and the New Testament. In the middle of 1534 he took up his abode in the dwelling of Thomas Poyntz (probably a relative of Lady Walsh), an English merchant adventurer. The house had been set apart since 1474 by the municipality for the use of English merchants, and was known as the English house. In 1535 Tyndale made the acquaintance of a young Englishman, Henry Phillips, said to be a Roman

Catholic student at Louvain, who had fled to Flanders after robbing his father. This man, by falsely professing great zeal for religious reform, insinuated himself into Tyndale's confidence, and after receiving much kindness from him, decoyed him from the English house, and betrayed him to the imperial officers. He was arrested on the 23rd May, 1535, and conveyed a prisoner to the Castle of Vilvoorde, the State prison of the Low Countries.

Great efforts were made to procure his liberation. Cromwell, Henry VIII.'s minister, wrote without effect to Carandolet, the Archbishop of Palermo, President of the Council, and to the Marquis of Bergen-op-Zoom, Governor of Vilvoorde, asking them to use their influence in favour of Tyndale. But the Low Countries then formed part of the possessions of the Emperor Charles V., who thought that in destroying a heretic he was doing God service.

In 1536 Tyndale was brought to trial for heresy, condemned, degraded from his orders, and sentenced to death. He was executed on the 6th August, 1536, being strangled at the stake, and his body afterwards burnt. At the stake, says Foxe, he cried with a fervent zeal and a loud voice, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes." Eight years before he wrote : " If they shall burn me, they shall do no other thing than I looked for." " There is none other way into the kingdom of life

than through persecution and suffering of pain, and of very death after the example of Christ."

Though not perhaps the foremost figure of the English Reformation, Tyndale was one of the most remarkable of its leaders. He left his country an unknown exile ; he lived abroad in poverty, obscurity, and danger ; and yet, before his death, he had made his name a household word in England. His original writings bear the impress of sound scholarship and of the highest literary power. They are unquestionably the ablest expositions of the views of the more advanced English Reformers who triumphed under Edward VI., and developed into the Puritan party under Elizabeth. His translation of the Bible, however, though incomplete, forms his surest title to fame.

The church of Little Sodbury is dedicated to St. Adeline. It formerly stood on the side of the hill immediately above the manor house, but with the exception of the south door it has all been taken down and re-erected in another part of the parish.

In 1538, being the thirtieth year of Henry VIII., some of the lands belonging to the burghers of Chipping Sodbury were attacked by Sir Nicholas Poyntz, of Iron Acton, who at the time was high steward of the county, and who had managed to possess himself of the charter of Chipping Sodbury. Again in 1551, being the fifth year of Edward VI.,

the burghers of Chipping Sodbury were deprived of their rights by Sir Maurice Walsh, of Little Sodbury.

Both these cases were tried in the Court of the Marches of Wales, a short account of which, and of Gloucestershire coming under its jurisdiction, is of some interest.

Miss Caroline A. J. Skeel, who has written an admirable book on the subject, says that "among the extraordinary courts of the Tudor and Stuart periods, special interest attaches to the Court of the Council in the Dominion and Principality of Wales and the Marches of the same." Its history, extending over more than two centuries, throws much light on methods of government, and also upon the social condition of the people within its jurisdiction. The court was a means of insuring order in districts long vexed by war, faction, and unpunished crime.

To understand why this court was established, and why the County of Gloucester was included, it is necessary to refer to previous history. Four years after the battle of Hastings Chester fell, and the conquest of England was completed. Neither William I. nor his immediate successors undertook the conquest of Wales. They had neither time nor inclination for warfare in the rugged mountains, where success was doubtful and plunder scarce. The Conqueror was content to plant along the Welsh border a line of castles for protection

against invasion, and in them were placed men, who with their Norman instinct for fighting and plunder, might be trusted to conquer Wales for their own profit. The task would be hard enough, he thought, to prevent them from growing over-powerful as against himself.

Between the days of William Rufus and those of Edward I. there grew up slowly indeed, but all the more surely the famous "Custom of the March." The position of the Lords Marchers was thoroughly anomalous as compared with that of the ordinary English baron. The King granted to any of them such lands as they may win. It was impossible to fix any definite limits within which privileges might be exercised. Even after the Lord Marcher had conquered Welsh territory, he always had to fear expulsion, and he would not be inclined to sue for a charter. Within the lordships the King's writ did not run, but the Lords Marchers had their own courts and officers. Feuds between Lords Marchers were decided in theory by the King, but in practise by private war. They had far more military experience than an ordinary English baron, for they were always fighting either each other or the men of Wales; and they were hard, turbulent and ruthless. The complete conquest of Wales took place soon after the death of Llewellyn in 1283 (Edward I.), and it brought to the front the question of March privilege. Edward I. lost no time in attacking the privilege of private

war, but neither he nor his successors had both strength and leisure to be wholly successful. The condition of Wales for nearly two centuries abounded with cases of felonies, kidnapping, murders, thefts, assaults, receiving stolen goods, rapes and other crimes, which went mostly unpunished, especially in the districts controlled by the Lords Marchers. The slightest sketch of the condition of the Welsh border in the Middle Ages is enough to show how urgent was the need of strong government. What was needed was some authority which should ensure the due punishment of crime and impartial justice, even between men of different race.

In the latter half of the fifteenth century, during the Wars of the Roses, King Edward IV., in his wars against Henry VI., was very much assisted by the Welsh, whom he found to be brave and most excellent soldiers; and in recompense for their services he designed to reform matters in Wales, that the intolerable oppression which the Welsh had hitherto endured should be regulated and taken off; and to that end he meant to establish a court within the principality. But the pressure of his own military struggles prevented him from carrying this into effect, and the court was not made a permanent institution until the reign of Henry VII.

A document of Henry VIII.'s reign, entitled "A table of the councillors of the Princes of

Wales," gives the following list of the Royal princes to whom a council had been assigned :—

Edward, eldest son of Edward I.	
Edward	„ Edward III.(Black Prince).
Henry	„ Henry IV.
Edward	„ Henry VI.
Edward	„ Edward IV.
Arthur and Henry, sons of Henry VII.	
The Lady Mary, daughter of Henry VIII.	

The court now in question embraced the whole of North and South Wales ; and the King thought well of strengthening it by the addition of some of the adjacent English counties. Chester claimed exemption on the ground that it was a county palatine, and the city of Bristol was also exempted. The three counties which were chosen were Shropshire, Herefordshire, and Gloucestershire.

The first six presidents of the court were all bishops, and they were succeeded by some of the most distinguished of our nobility. The first four of the bishops were not intrusted with the power to inflict the capital penalty, and they could therefore do but little to improve the state of things. The condition of the Marches had become intolerable, and a strong hand was needed. A suitable person was found in the then Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, named Rowland Lee. He was a hard, rough-tongued, and determined man, and he had materially assisted Cromwell in the

suppression of the religious houses. He was specially empowered to inflict the death penalty, and he never hesitated to use it, particularly in the cases where the offender was a person of importance. Assisted by Justice Englefield, he traversed the country, and within the space of six years he hung five thousand men. He suppressed crime sternly, and was finally able to thank God that Wales was quiet and brought into civility.

The head-quarters of the court was at Ludlow, but it was frequently itinerant. It was sitting at Montgomery in 1538 when the citizens of Chipping Sodbury appealed to it against Sir Nicholas Poyntz, who had enclosed some of their lands, called the Gaunts fields, and had possessed himself of their charter. The court ordered Sir Nicholas to desist from enclosing the lands, and to restore the charter to the complainants.

In the year 1551 the burgesses had again to appeal to this court, which was then sitting at Ludlow. Their action was in the persons of John Wyrrieth and Thomas Smith against Maurice Welch (changed from Walsh), who had forcibly letted and interrupted the burghers in the use of their commons in the Marshes and Meadows in Old Sodbury, and had distrained and impounded their cattle, and had enclosed their commons there with hedges and ditches. He had also denied them their rights of pasturage in the pastures called

the Leyes, the Kenleys, the Nokes, and the Hangers, for cattle without number, which they claimed to have enjoyed time out of mind, also the right of each one for one cow and one horse within the ground called the Marshes and the Meadows.

The council had at first appointed Sir John Veynlow, John Welch, and Thomas Throgmorton of Tortworth to arbitrate; but the last named, who came of an old Worcestershire family, and had only just settled in Gloucestershire, and was on intimate terms with Maurice Welch, declined to serve. The other two followed his example. The council then invited Sir John Dennis to act, and he consented, subject to being aided by an able lawyer named David Broke, sergeant-at-law.

Sir John's award was that the burghers of Chipping Sodbury were to enjoy all their old rights in the waste ground called Horwood, outside the hedge of the ground called Little Sodbury Park, lately disparked, and in the lane leading to the Yate that divideth and encloseth the said waste grounds from the common meadows of Old Sodbury, and shall also use for their cattle the ground called Kingrove Wood, also Gaunts fields. But their claim to the grounds called the Hangers, the Nokes, the Kinleys, the Leys, the Marshes and Meadows lying east of Horwood, was not allowed. This award was approved by the council in the Marches of Wales, and it must, on the whole,

be considered a defeat to the men of Chipping Sodbury, and their representative was immediately served with the following notice :—

“ And Henry Bradshaw attorney-general of the Lord King, who now sues for the said Lord King, says for the same Lord King that the plea of the aforesaid John Wyrriyett is not sufficient in law for claiming or having the liberties and franchises aforesaid. To which the same attorney of the said Lord King has no need nor is bound by the law of the land to answer for the same Lord King. Therefore the said attorney for the said Lord King seeks judgment by reason of the insufficient plea and claim aforesaid, and that the franchises and liberties aforesaid may be seized into the hands of the said Lord King. And that the same John Wyrriyett be imprisoned for the usurpation aforesaid upon the said Lord King, and make fine and redemption with the aforesaid Lord King for his usurpation aforesaid.

“ (Signed) HENRY BRADSHAW.”

This awe-inspiring document doubtless had the desired effect, for we hear no more of John Wyrriyett.

A religious guild was founded in Chipping Sodbury by Thomas Hampton and others, in the twenty-second year of Henry VI. (1443), and was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The master was chosen annually, and was generally a clothier or a weaver.

The objects of the guild were the finding and maintaining two priests to pray for the good estate of the king, and after his decease for his soul; for the benefactor of the guild, for its founders, and always for the brothers and sisters of the said guild, and for all Christian souls. The total income of the guild at the time of its dissolution was £18 19s., and was thus disposed of:—

	£	s.	d.
For the two priests.. ..	12	0	4
„ four obits	0	8	0
„ organ-player	0	14	8
„ steward	0	14	8
„ keeping of the clock ..	0	6	8
„ keeping of the ornaments	0	8	8
„ rents resolute	0	11	9
Leaving a margin, presumably for charitable uses, of	3	10	7
	<hr/>		
	£18	19	0

It will be noted that no provision was made for the clerk, who was paid by a levy of a penny per house on every house in the town. Part of the possessions of the guild consisted of a house—vulgarly called the Guild House, otherwise the Church House—and garden adjoining, situate at Chipping Sodbury between the tenement in which

Thomas Hodder now dwells on the west, and the hospitium or inn called "The George" on the east, the king's highway on the south, and against the Rouche Were on the north. This Guild House, with the other portion of the guild possessions, was granted in 2 Edward VI. (1547-8) to Sir Miles Partridge, one of the King's commissioners, for dealing with this class of property.

He seems to have paid £10 5s. 4d. for them, or for a portion of them, and to have sold them the same year to Richard Pate, of Gloucester (another of the King's commissioners) for the sum of £34 5s. 8d.

In the fifth year of Queen Mary's reign Richard Pate, for a sum of £24 13s. 4d., granted a portion of his purchase to the burghers of Chipping Sodbury to build a town hall and an almshouse. The trustees of this grant were to receive the rents, and pay them to two burgesses elected by the bailiff and burgesses for the support, relief, and maintenance of the poor.

Amongst the deeds in possession of the town is one dated 4 Edward VI. (1549), stating that in the second year of that King's reign he granted for 24 shillings, issuing from the rent or farm of one tenement, one burgage, and one void plot of land in the tenure of Thos. Collymore, in the borough of Chipping Sodbury, erstwhile pertaining to the late Guild of the Blessed Mary, to Anthony Borchid, Esq., to be held in fealty and not in chief.

The last incumbent of the guild was John Glover, and in 1553 he received a pension of £4 a year.

It will be remembered that during Hugh le Despenser's attainder in Richard II.'s reign, thirty-two acres of pasture were granted to the Priory of Bradenstoke in Wiltshire. These, of course, passed to the King at the Dissolution, and in 14 Elizabeth (1571) an information was lodged in the Court of Exchequer for lands in Chipping Sodbury formerly belonging to the dissolved priory, and called Town Lands.

It was dismissed after a full hearing. The chief witness in the case said: "And at the visitation the one half of the said rents was presented to belong to the Prince, and the other half to the said town of Chipping Sodbury; and further of his own knowledge he saith that at the time of visitation, the commissioners said that the town of Chipping Sodbury 'myght have kepte the hole landes to their own use.' " *

* Sir Miles Partridge was one of nine royal commissioners to inquire into the chantries of Bristol and of Gloucestershire (see *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archæological Society*, viii. 232). He borrowed from Sir William Sharington, who was one of his fellow-commissioners, as well as the Mint-master of Bristol, the sum of £5,300. This enabled him to buy the whole chantry estate of Bristol, with two insignificant exceptions, for the sum of £3,737 16s.; and the balance of the loan was probably applied to a similar purpose in the County of Gloucestershire. There is reason to believe that the value which was fixed by the commissioners was underestimated. The Mint-master was a very dishonest person, and he confessed to having committed enormous frauds. Sir Miles Partridge was hanged for felony on 26th February, 1552, but as his brother Hugh had been joined with him in the Bristol grant, the property escaped confiscation.

In 10 James I. (1613)* another information was lodged in the Court of Exchequer at the instance of John Horwood, "a taylor and common informer, and found and censured for a common Barristy, being denied to live within the boroughe as he would (as himself confesseth)," not only for the lands and houses of the dissolved guild, but also for the Meade Ridinge and the Stubb Ridinge. He also alleged "that all this property had been disposed of by the pretended Bayliffe, Burgesses, and Churchwardens of Chipping Sodbury for their private benefit to the wrong disherison of the King's Majestie, and doe conceale the premises and his Majestie's title, and have refused all offers of composition, and do waste the houses and trees in upon the premises." The court decided against the King's Majesty.

Atkyns states that the same claim was brought into court again in 32 Charles II. (1679), and was again dismissed.

The town has been spared further attacks upon its property since that reign.

Other lands and houses have been left to the town from time to time for the repairs of the church, for the repairs of the highways, for a grammar school, and for charitable uses, the

* Before this, John Horwood is twice described at the Assizes of Gloucester in Queen Elizabeth's reign: first in 1595, "as a labourer who was, and still is, a habitual disturber of the peace of his neighbours in Chippinge Sodburie;" and again in 1599, when he had become a tailor, the jurors gave him the same character.—MS. Department, British Museum.





CHIPPING SODBURY CHURCH ON THE NORTH SIDE.

management of which and of the properties already described is now entrusted by the Charity Commissioners to three committees, namely : Trustees of the Town Trust ; Trustees of the Grammar School and Town Lands ; Trustees of the Church Lands.

The town possesses a fine old cross, which now stands in the garden belonging to the Roman Catholic Chapel, and is thus described by Pooley : " It was removed to its present site in 1862. Previously it stood near the Portcullis Inn, but was carried thence by the bailiff in 1772 to the orchard over the brook, near Trotman's Mill. The motive for the removal in 1772 was partly veneration for a relic of the olden time, as well as to preserve it from further dilapidation ; and also because by so doing more space was afforded for public traffic. The shaft is octagonal and tapering, perhaps originally a monolith, but now made of two stones cemented together. It is brought to a square below by the usual broaches of short outline, and is mortised into the socket. The socket in this instance is unusually large, and differs from the ordinary form in having its sides, which are those of a square, hollowed. The shaft is 8 feet 9 inches high to the moulding, and the base 3 feet 2 inches square, by 18 inches in depth. Its date is 1553, and it is now raised on modern masonry."

The church, which is dedicated to St. John the Baptist, was originally of Early English architecture, of which it still retains some features, but it

is now chiefly of the Perpendicular. It consists of chancel, nave, and north and south aisles. At the west end there is a good tower adorned with turret and pinnacles, but it is not bonded to the church. In the north aisle there is a tomb carrying the Walsh arms, but even when Atkyns wrote in 1712 the inscription was obliterated. The font is of the thirteenth century. When Mr. Street restored this church, in 1869, he discovered a stone pulpit which was not known to exist, so completely was it covered with plaster. It is of the fifteenth century, and it is erected on the west side of the first pier of the north aisle. Remains of fifteenth-century decoration in colours still exist upon the walls of the church. There are six bells, all dated 1753, and they bear the following inscriptions :—

1. Fear God and Honour the King.
2. Peace and good neighbourhood.
3. Prosperity to this Parish.
4. Thos. Dorrington—Churchwarden.
5. Abel Rudhall cast us all.
6. I to the church the living call and to the grave do summon all.

The church of Chipping Sodbury was always a chapel of ease to Old Sodbury, until the year 1856, when a separation took place. The living, however, is still in the gift of the vicar of Old Sodbury.

Besides the Roman Catholic chapel, there are two other places of worship—one belonging to the





Society of Friends, and the other to the denomination of Baptists.

The late Mr. John Latimer, whose essay appears in the *Bristol and Gloucestershire Archæological Society's Transactions* (Vol. XIV., pp. 221—284) on "Leland in Gloucestershire," quotes from that author's *Itinerary*, that the "Manor Place stode harde by the West End of the Church, now clene downe." This must have been written in the first half of the sixteenth century. There are no remains of the structure now.

The town mainly consists of five streets, which run consecutively in the following order, viz. Roucidal Street, High Street, Broad Street, Wallace Place, and Horse Street. The principal one, called High Street, was at one time divided for a considerable portion of its length by a middle row of houses and shops. These were pulled down and removed at the end of the eighteenth century, and a portion of the site is now occupied by a clock tower..

The Bull Ring was situated north-east of Horse Street, in a field behind the Boot Inn and the Hop Yard on the south side of the same street.

Inns and public-houses have been numerous here. In 1726 there were fourteen: the "George," "Cap and Feathers," "White Hart," "Star," "Goat," "Portcullis," "Horse Shoe," "Bell," "Crown," "Mitre," "Swan," "Three Crowns," "White Horse," "Queen's Head." In 1780 the "Cap and Feathers" lost its licence,

and at the end of that century the principal inns were the "Swan," "Bell," "George," and "Royal Oak." *

The principal events in the history of the town after the extinction of the Le Gros family (otherwise Crassus) are, in addition to those already stated, the martyrdom supposed to have taken place there in the reign of Henry VII. of a godly woman, whose name the author of the *Book of Martyrs* (Foxe) did not know, but he gives the name of his informant. On this occasion the bishop's chancellor, Dr. Whittington, who was presiding, was attacked by a bull, which ran furiously at him, and without doing the least injury to any other person, killed him on the spot, and carried his entrails away upon its horns.

The second martyr is not mentioned by Foxe. The county histories tell us that John Pigot was burnt at Chipping Sodbury in Queen Mary's reign ; and they confirm the fact by stating that two men, named George Cole and George Daniel, were ordered to search for and apprehend John Bernard and John Walsh, who used to repair to the town, carrying with them Pigot's bones, and showing them to the people, persuaded them to be constant in their religion. There is no mention in Foxe's *Martyrs* of a Pigot that was burnt in Gloucestershire, but he mentions two of that name who were burnt elsewhere. He also mentions in regard to

* Barfoot and Wilkes, *Universal British Directory*.



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CAP AND FEATHERS INN, CHIPPING SODBURY.

one of these two martyrs that the above facts about Pigot's bones took place at Sudbury. The inhabitants of Chipping Sodbury, however, are firmly convinced that Pigot suffered in their town.

In 1582 a poorhouse was established in the town by Sir Richard Berkeley, Thomas Throgmorton, Nicholas Poyntz, Walter Dennis, John Seymour, and Nicholas Thorpe, all gentry of the neighbourhood, by a lease of the Town House and other premises.

During the Great Rebellion, Colonel Massie, the Governor of Gloucester, placed a party of his men in Yate Court, in the adjoining parish of Yate, with the view of securing the neighbourhood, many of the people around being in favour of the Parliament. But as the neighbourhood became more full of the King's forces, Colonel Massie feared the loss of his small garrison at Yate Court, as they were so near Bristol, which was then in the King's hands. Indeed, without help they could not leave. Colonel Massie therefore marched to Kingscote with three hundred horse and dragoons, intending to send a party thence to bring off the garrison. But when informed of a party of horse being at Chipping Sodbury, he brought his men down there, and finding that an enemy had arrived there to the assistance of Colonel Gerard against Yate Court, he resolved to attack that night. He had no sooner appeared at the town's end than the guard fled, and his men marched into Chipping Sodbury one by one because of the enemy's barra-

cadoes. They went up to the main guard, consisting of forty horse, who, being surprised and daunted at the sudden entrance of Massie's men, and not confiding in their own strength, quitted the place and left their comrades in their quarters, most of whom escaped on foot by the back side of the town. Massie captured eighty horses, many arms, twenty prisoners, including two captains, and the next morning he brought off the forlorn garrison of Yate Court.

On another occasion Colonel Massie marched from Ross and passed the Severn towards Berkeley, proposing to join with Sir William Waller, who was "noised to be come into the borders of this countrey, when the day before some of the Berkeley forces had issued out towards our garrison at Slimbridge ; but ere they could retreat to the castle, the greater forces fell upon them, slew twelve, whereof one captain, an Irish rebel, and took twenty-five prisoners, whereof two were captains, and one lieutenant. The governor with his party advanced thence towards Chipping Sodbury, when Colonel Strange with a party of horse began to fortify ; but upon notice of our advance retreated to Berkeley."

When Prince Rupert took the city of Bristol from Colonel Fiennes, he immediately set to work to enlarge and strengthen the defences. The city was unable to furnish the extra number of labourers needed for the completion of the Royal Fort with

the rapidity which the course of the war made urgent. It was a new fortress, deeply entrenched, mounted with twenty-two guns, and provided with barracks, magazines and other military buildings. Workmen were drafted by force from the surrounding country, the inhabitants of which were also required to contribute to the cost of maintaining the garrison. One of the warrants for labourers, dated 15th June, 1644, which was transmitted to the head constables of Grumbolds Ash Hundred, Gloucestershire, is amongst the State papers. It included all three Sodburies. The warrant required the sending in of sixty men for a few days, provided with good shovels and pickaxes, their wages being promised out of the monthly contributions levied on the hundred.

In 1651, September 16th, after the battle of Worcester, which was so disastrous to the Royalists, Charles, afterwards Charles II., mounted on horseback with Mrs. Jane Lane on a pillion behind him, rode through Chipping Sodbury on his way from Cirencester to Abbots' Leigh in Somersetshire.*

In 1681 Chipping Sodbury was granted a charter by Charles II. for the government of the town by a Corporation, consisting of a mayor, six aldermen, twelve burgesses, with a high steward, a recorder, a town clerk ; also a court of record, to be erected for trying all manner of personal suits, actions for debt, &c., arising within the borough, and not

* Professor's Rowley's paper in the Clifton Antiquarian Club's *Proceedings*.

exceeding five pounds. The charter is a long one, and it occupies ten and a half folio pages with double columns in Atkyn's *History of Gloucestershire*; it contains between seven and eight thousand words; and perhaps it is well that its cost is buried in oblivion. To do Charles II. justice, he was always ready to oblige in the matter of charters; and he is supposed to have derived a considerable income from calling in old charters and in re-granting them with precisely the same words, as well as in granting fresh ones when not opposed to his interests.

The following is a list of the first appointments under the charter :—

First Mayor.

SAMUEL BURCOMBE.

First Six Aldermen for Life.

RICHARD CABLE, SENR.	NICHOLAS LEGG.
JOHN SKINNER.	STEPHEN SMITH.
BERNARD ORCHARD.	JOHN WICKHAM.

First Twelve Burgesses for Life.

JOHN BARNES.	RICHARD STOKES.
WALTER WHITE.	DANIELL WEBB.
HENRY WICKHAM.	JOHN RUSSELL.
THOMAS DORRINGTON.	R. ELLIOTTS.
THOMAS TILLY.	JOHN SAWBRIDGE.
HENRY WHITE.	R. EDWARDS.

High Steward.

THE MARQUIS OF WORCESTER.

Under Steward.

JOHN POWELL, learned in law.

Town Clerk.

RICHARD HAWKESWORTH.

Sad to relate, the charter in question proved to be a burden rather than a blessing ; and therefore, in 1688, the inhabitants had the good sense to surrender it. From that date the town returned to its ancient government by a bailiff, the last of whom was the late valued and much respected resident, Mr. J. D. B. Trenfield, who died in 1904. A handsome Mace was acquired at this time. The county council, district council, and the parish council now, of course, administer its affairs.

The industries of the town appear to have consisted chiefly of wool, salt, and lime ; and according to Barfoot and Wilkes' *British Directory*, already



The Seventeenth-Century Mace.

CHARLES II.

quoted, here was the greatest cheese market in England, except Atherstone in Warwickshire. It was not a large market for wool, but still a good trade seems to have been done here. It is a tradition in the town that the north room on the ground floor of the Literary Institute was the place where the bargains in wool were struck. This room still contains an old fresco of a man, possibly a weaver, and within living memory the walls were lined with sentences in old black letter, which but for the paint-brush might have thrown some light upon the above tradition. There is an interesting tombstone in Chipping Sodbury Church, carrying roughly-cut figures of a master-weaver and his wife, and with the following inscription: 'Hic jacet Ricardus Colmor et Edithar uxor ejus qui obiit vicesimo vi. Die Aprilis. An Dni. MCCCC. . . . iii. cujus die propetietur Deus. Amen.'

Amongst the deeds belonging to the town is a lease dated 1609 for ninety-nine years between George Webb, *clothier*, and other trustees of houses and lands in the parish.

Another lease in 1610 is between George Webb, *clothier*, and the trustees of town lands.

In 1779 Rudder states that "there is no prevailing manufacture at present. One master clothier employs a few hands, but the women and children have sufficient spinning-work brought them from other parts."

The old Salt House, which was used for refining salt, still exists. It faces the brook on the north side of the town.

The Rev. C. S. Taylor writes that at the time of the Domesday salt was an article of necessity to an extent which we cannot understand. During Lent the whole population had to live on salt fish, and for at least half the year the only meat that the majority of the people could obtain would be salt meat. The proximity, therefore, of the Worcestershire supplies of salt must have been a great boon to the men of Gloucestershire.

The salt, which was made by evaporation from the muddy waters of the Severn, must have been of very poor quality ; but if used for curing fish, its impurities would not be obvious, as they would be if such salt had been used for domestic purposes.

Mr. Taylor further states that from time to time small salt springs have been discovered in different parts of Gloucestershire. Rudder mentions them at Sandhurst and at Acton Somerville ; but they do not seem to have been ever sufficient to afford a permanent supply, and he does not doubt that with the exception of the supply from the salt-pans at Awre, all the salt which is mentioned in our Survey came from Worcestershire. Some of the Worcestershire brine springs were considered to pertain to different manors in Gloucestershire. Indeed Wich, probably Droit-

wich, is named in eight of the ten places in Gloucestershire where salt was manufactured.

There is no doubt that Domesday describes Sopeberie as having "1 *virgata* in Wiche quæ reddebat 25 sextaria salis." Rudder translates this as "one yard-land in Wiche belongs to Sodbury, which paid 25 sextaries of salt."

The sextaria would probably have contained a quantity regulated by the custom of the manor. Thus the city of Gloucester paid twelve sextaries of honey according to the measure of the borough, while Kemerton paid eight sextaries according to the King's measure, clearly implying that the sextary was an uncertain quantity. The deeds granting leases for the Salt House already mentioned are all dated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which leads to the inference that an older one had existed.

Chipping Sodbury possesses an excellent sort of limestone, called the whyte-lays, of a blue cast, very compact and ponderous, and it burns into a strong lime as white as snow.

The town is remarkable for its gabled houses, one of which is here depicted. It originally belonged to a family named Vayre or Farre; and now, after several modifications, is known as the Fairy House.



VAYRE HOUSE, CHIPPING SODBURY

NOTES ON URSO, THE SHERIFF.

Urso d'Abitot, or de Wirecestre as he is also called in Domesday Book, was the Viscount or Sheriff of Worcestershire, wherein he earned an evil notoriety, which lasted long after he was dead.* All he had in Gloucestershire was a hide of land in Seisincote, parcel of the estate of Elunin, which had been granted him, and he is once more mentioned: "Urso, the sheriff, has so oppressed the tenants on the virgate of land at [Droit]wich, belonging to Brictric's late manor of Sodbury, that they cannot now pay the salt due from them." This is not the only instance of his rapacity, and the lands of the See of Worcester, and of the abbeys of Evesham and Pershore, were systematically despoiled by him without redress. His brother Robert, the king's dispenser, aided and abetted him. Urso gave lands belonging to the See in dowry with his own daughter, despite remonstrance and appeal.

Urso is said to have drawn upon himself the wrath of Archbishop Aldred, of York, to whom the Bishop of Worcester was then a suffragan, by encroaching on the sanctuary of the canons on the south side of the church of Worcester with

* *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archæological Society*, iv. 183.

some works in connection with the castle. The archbishop excommunicated him, predicting that unless they were removed his posterity should not hold any land of the Church. His curse is preserved in the form of a couplet—

“Hightest thou, Urse,
Have thou God’s curse.”

He was living in the early years of Henry I.’s reign, and being found witnessing several royal charters, he would appear to be still in royal favour.



OLD SODBURY.

The history of the manor has already been stated.

About 1140 Bishop Simon, of Worcester, had confirmed to Tewkesbury Abbey, among the endowments of Robert Fitzhamon and other pious persons, "Ecclesiam de Sopabri cum pertinentiis suis." But as the estate had belonged to the See in early days, it is likely that the cathedral gave up possession of the church at Sodbury.

In 1221 Pope Honorius III. issued an indult to the abbot and convent of Theokesbiri (Tewkesbury) to enter on and retain to their own uses when void the churches of Thornbiri, Maresfeld, *Soppebiri*, Feireford, Chedeslei, Merlawe, and Hamelesdene, already granted to the abbey by Pope Lucius, on condition of their putting fit persons therein as vicars, as also certain churches and benefices granted by the Bishops of Llandaff and Exeter, but which some of the former abbots have given to secular clerks, to the great hurt of the monastery.*

At about this date the living of Old Sodbury must have come into the possession of the See of Worcester, for in 1218 the Bishop of Worcester gave the rectory of Old Sodbury to the monastery of

* *Calendar of Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, i. 81.

Benedictine monks at Worcester ; and when, at the Dissolution, it passed into the hands of the King, Henry VIII. gave it to the Chapter of Worcester. It was the only bit of the large Church property in Gloucestershire that the King restored to Worcester Cathedral.

It is still in the gift of the Dean and Chapter of that church, and it remains a vicarage in the deanery of Hawkesbury, dedicated to John the Baptist. The church is of the late Norman period, and although it has since been considerably altered and enlarged, much of the original work remains. In the nave there is an arcade of Norman columns, there are two Norman windows, and the tower is also Norman. It possesses some interesting tombs, on one of which rests a military effigy carved in wood. The parish, which is beautifully situated on a spur of the Cotswold Hills, is in the hundred of Grumbalds Ash. It is about one mile from the town of Chipping Sodbury, and about half a mile from the village of Little Sodbury.

When Sir John Dennis, with the aid of Sergeant Brooke, arbitrated in the dispute between the inhabitants of Chipping Sodbury and Maurice Welch, they also settled a dispute between the copyholders and the cottagers of Old Sodbury.

“ It appeared to the arbitrators that before this time there were certain grounds enclosed in the meadows and marshes, which severally and particularly were limited and appointed to the copy-

holders, which grounds at this present still remain enclosed, and are occupied in several by the same copyholders, whereof there was very little in quantity appointed and limited to any cottager, cottage-holder, or half-yard land within Old Sodbury aforesaid; by reason whereof the same cottages were impaired by loss of such common as they pretended to have in the meadows and marshes aforesaid, and the said copyholders thereby much bettered and amended. It is therefore ordered by the said arbitrators, and by the assent of Maurice Welch, and also his assent for his tenants as much as in him lieth, or may do, that the copyholders of the said manor of Old Sodbury herein-after named, and all such as shall hereafter have and hold such copyhold lands as they now have, shall not at any time after the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel, which shall be in the year of our Lord God MDLIII. (1553) use, have, and enjoy any common for any manner of cattle in the said waste ground called Horwood; and that the cottagers of the manor of Old Sodbury, which now be, or hereafter shall be dwelling in the cottages or half-yard lands, where they now dwell, shall have reasonable common after the rate of their cottages or half-yard lands in the waste ground called Horwood, anything before expressed to the contrary notwithstanding. It was further agreed between the two parties that a Hayward should be appointed, with authority to take and impound all such cattle,

which shall be taken in or upon Horwood or Kinggrove aforesaid of all such persons which have not common there, and the same to impound in the lord's pound at Old Sodbury for the same ; and to have yearly half the profits of the pound."

The names of the *copyholders* of the manor of Old Sodbury, for term of lives, who have their common in Horwood, within the County of Gloucester :—

John Woodward.
John Saunders.
John Alridge.
Maurice Alridge.
Thomas Hopkins.
Richard Francombe.
John Coxe.

Each of which hold a messuage with Yardland with his appurtenances.

The names of the *cottagers* of the manor of Old Sodbury which are appointed to have common upon King Grove and Horwood, according to the rate of their cottages :—

John Bishop, two cottages.
Thomas Tiley.
William Dack.
John Martin.
W. Francombe.
Henry Saunders.
John Jervice.
William Balle.
William Colls.

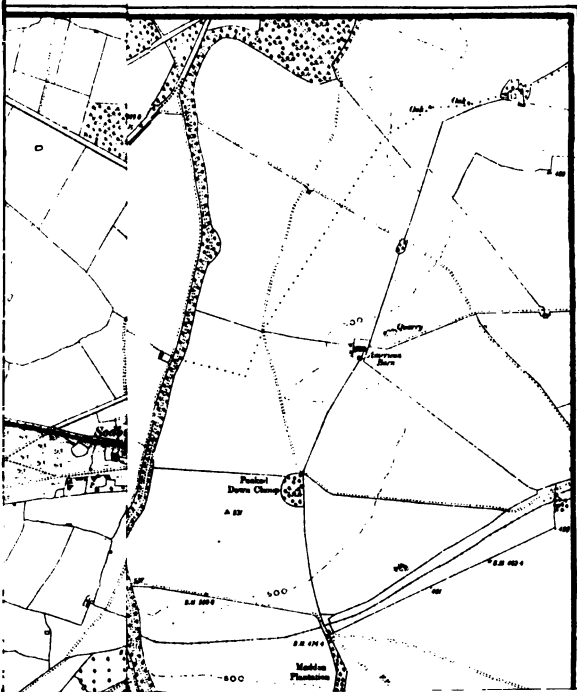
Each of these men had one cottage.

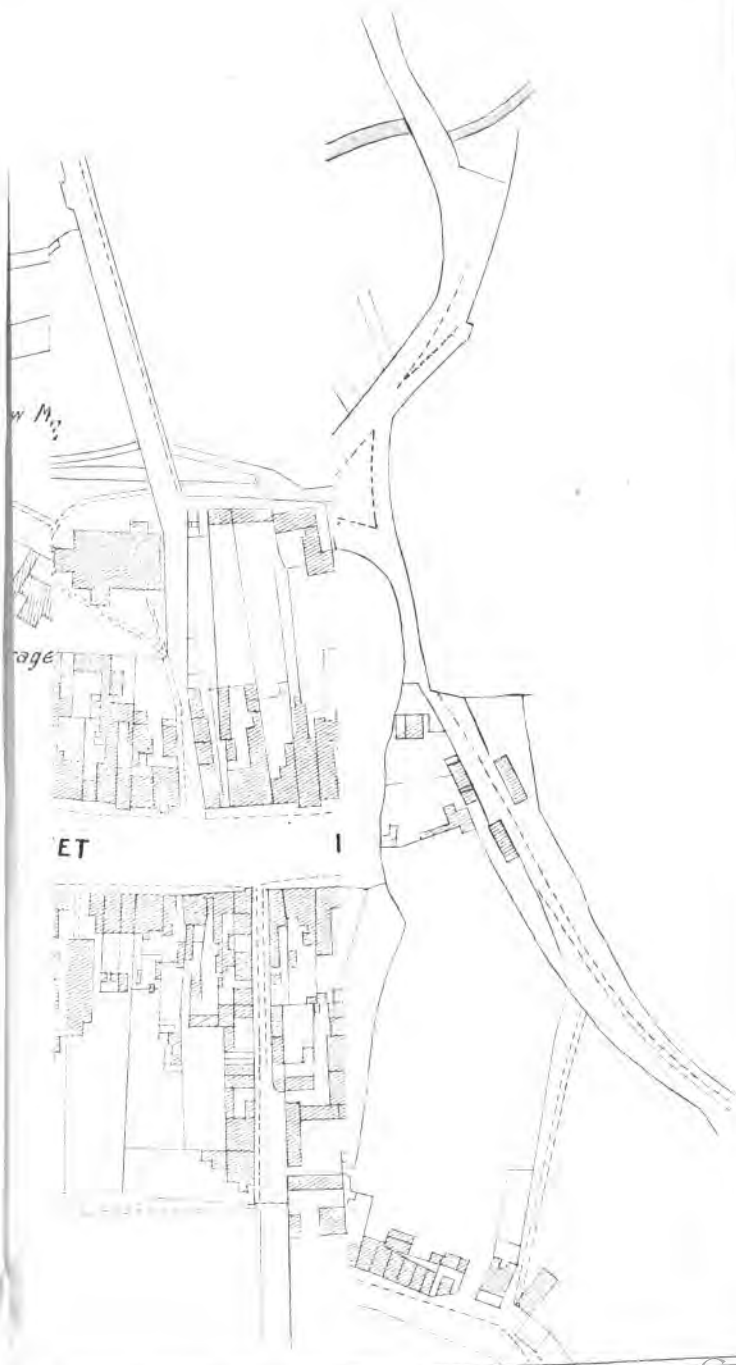
John Hill.
 Thomas Anstee.
 John Adams.
 Francis Codrington.
 William Whiting.
 Robert Barrow.
 John Yeoman.
 Nicholas Wickson.
 Robert Hopkins.
 John Adams.

Each of these men
 had one cottage.



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